

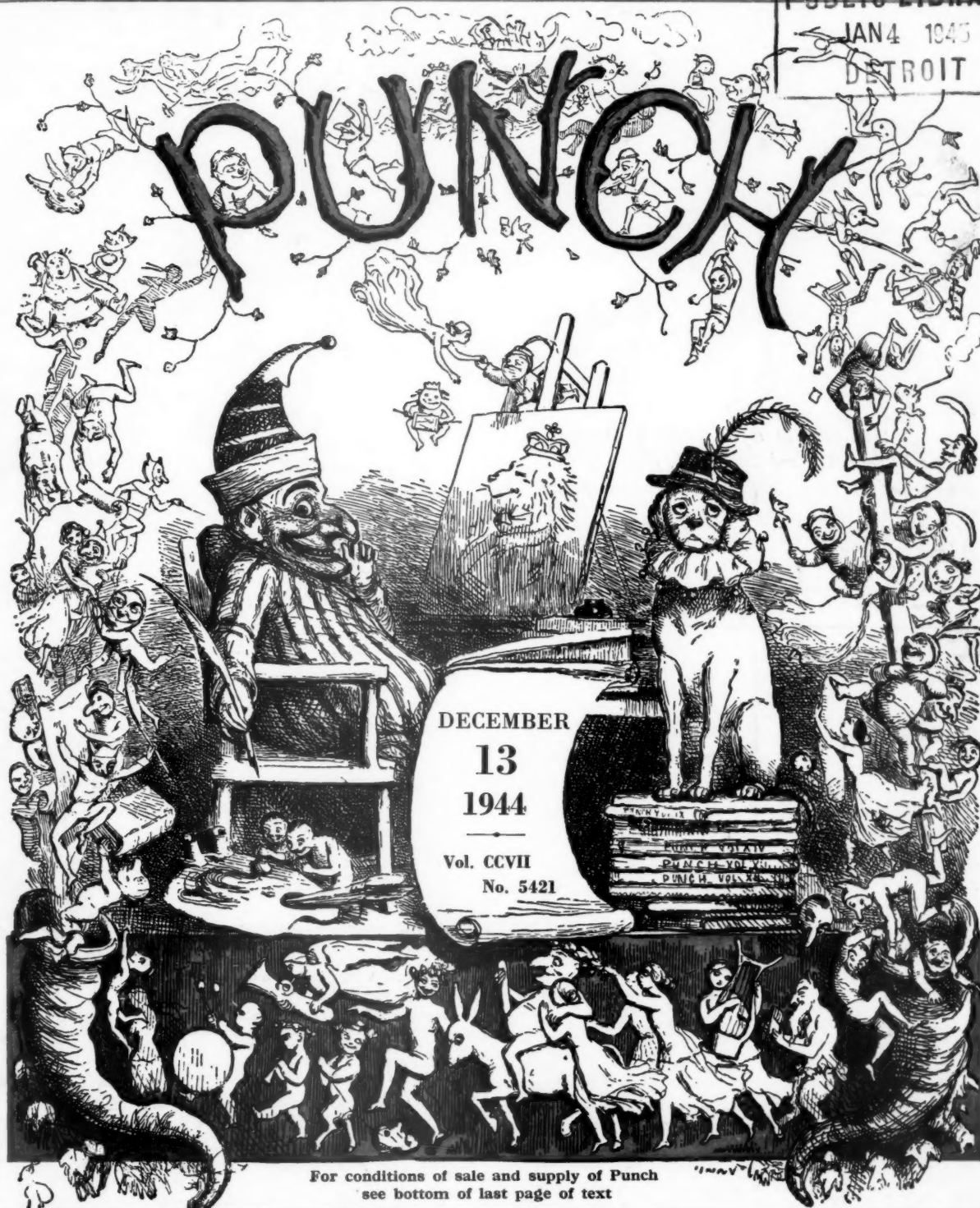
DUNLOP - Makers of History in Rubber

4H/163

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DETROIT



For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text

Fit **Triplex**—and be safe

Regd



the lovable fragrance

Shops can still supply limited quantities of Lavender Soap, Tale and Brilliantine, though devotees must wait till peace to enjoy Yardley Lavender Perfume.

YARDLEY LAVENDER
YARDLEY - 33 OLD BOND STREET LONDON




CHILDREN have always liked the ease and comfort of Meridian and in these days of "Utility" there is no reason (except it be short supply) to deny them this pleasure

MERIDIAN
UNDERWEAR

Though the children may get "extra" coupons, make the most of them by buying MERIDIAN Utility.

FINE, THANKS!
I eat something crisp and crunchy every day.



When I can get it, I prefer

RYVITA

CRISP, NOURISHING DAILY BREAD

Restorative Treatment for the Impaired Digestion

THESE are busy days for most men and women. With long working hours, voluntary service, shopping queues . . . there is little time for the preparation of regular meals. The result is that makeshift meals and snacks impose undue strain on the digestion.

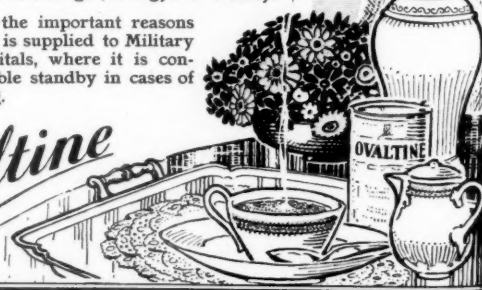
Should the digestion be impaired in this way it is important to give it relief from abnormal strain, and this can best be accomplished by avoiding rushed meals, taking instead a cup of 'Ovaltine'.

Scientifically prepared from malt, milk and eggs — 'Ovaltine' provides concentrated nourishment in a form exceptionally easy to assimilate. Without digestive strain the nutritive properties of 'Ovaltine' are rapidly absorbed to bring quick reinforcement of nerve-strength, energy and vitality.

This is one of the important reasons why 'Ovaltine' is supplied to Military and Civil Hospitals, where it is considered a valuable standby in cases of difficult feeding.

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P637A



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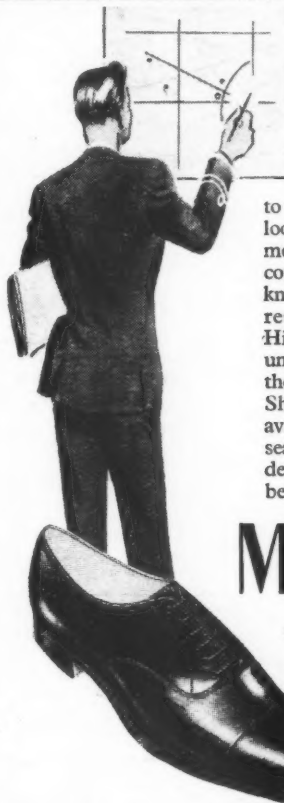


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and Scarves is at the
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Birmingham	Lewis's
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Eastbourne	Bobby & Co.
Edinburgh	Jenners
Glasgow	Lewis's
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Liverpool	Bon Marché
Manchester	Lewis's
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Hidden Reserves

To be frank, there is little to choose between one good-looking shoe and another, on mere appearance. But, with nine coupons at stake, it is as well to know that Moccasin Shoes have reserves of wearing-power. Hidden details; inside finish, unskimped workmanship, make them keep their shape. Moccasin Shoes may not always be readily available, but they are worth searching for! We can be confident that your first pair will not be your last.

MOCCASIN
*Two purpose
Shoes*



PADMORE & BARNES LTD., NORTHAMPTON



As a
matter
of fact...

there is still available in this country a cigarette which gives you a pleasure which millions seek but never find. In the full flavour and the rich aroma of the best Turkish leaf you find not the titivation of the senses but smooth soothing satisfaction. And, in Sobranie Turkish No. 6 you have this leaf blended by a master hand into a cigarette which enables you to cut down your consumption of cigarettes while you increase the pleasure of smoking. That is why we are proud to offer you the satisfaction of

SOBRANIE
TURKISH No. 6

made by the makers of BALKAN
SOBRANIE Turkish Cigarettes



By appointment to
H.M. King George VI
Previous appointment
to the late King George V

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HARRIS
*famous for Bacon
since 1770*

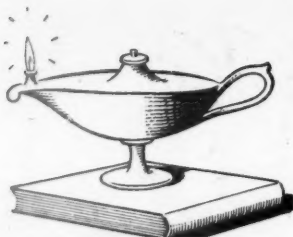
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(REGD. TRADE MARK)

All available supplies of SPARKLETS BULBS are being distributed as equitably as possible. For the present, please "go easy with the soda" and return empty Bulbs promptly to your usual supplier.

HYGIENIC—CONVENIENT—ECONOMICAL





*"In the present
state of medical
knowledge..."*

The modern doctor can afford to admit the limits of medical knowledge for the very reason that it is growing so fast. Take 'Sanatogen' Nerve Tonic. Science does not worry that it has not yet been able to explain precisely *how* the special combination found in 'Sanatogen' does its work: it is content with the fact that 'Sanatogen' does in fact revitalize exhausted nerves. Ask your chemist for a tin of 'Sanatogen'.

'SANATOGEN'

Regd. Trade Mark

NERVE TONIC

In one size only during war time—
6/6d. (including Purchase Tax).
A 'GENATOSAN' Product.



Once upon a time the only metal that could be sealed into glass was platinum. Chance research workers and craftsmen have produced glasses into which other metals can be sealed. This has made possible mercury arc rectifiers, large cathode ray tubes and new radio valves. Successful marriages of this kind are all in the day's work to Chance Brothers—have any manufacturers a 'girl' who looks like being left on the shelf?

FOR SCIENCE, INDUSTRY & THE HOME **CHANCE GLASS**

CHANCE BROTHERS LIMITED • GLASSMAKERS SINCE 1824 • HEAD OFFICE:
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*Even after
100 years ...*

SHAVING—AN IMPORTANT DISCOVERY!—THE EUXEIS, for Shaving without the use of Soap or Water, with greater comfort and in much less time than is usually required. Noblemen and Gentlemen, who have skin of thin texture, and suffer from irritation caused by Soaps, will be most agreeably surprised at the absence of these inconveniences, in the use of the Euxeis: for its peculiar property is to leave the face beautifully smooth and soft, and more capable of resisting the effects of sudden transitions from heat to cold, experienced in a variable climate, like our own. The Euxeis may be safely used at Sea, in the East or West Indies, and all the Colonies, as climate will not deteriorate its qualities, or time depreciate its value! Sold in Bottles, at 6d. each, by the Inventor and Proprietor, S. Lloyd, Perfumer, 1, Foubert's Place, Regent-street, opposite the end of Conduit-street.

Reproduced from "Punch,"
Aug. 10th, 1844

Still the greatest shave!

Manufactured by
AIMÉE LLOYD & CO. (1933) LTD.
TENTERDEN, KENT
PRICE 1/6 PER JAR, PLUS 4d. TAX

Welcome Always—
Keep it Handy

Grant's

A limited supply
still available

Cherry Brandy

MORELLA



**Victory
through
Light ..**

A very large proportion of the Research manufacturing and man-power resources of the Mazda Lamp Works are now engaged in hastening the victorious end of the war. Think of this if you have any difficulty in getting Mazda Lamps for your home.

MAZDA
LAMPS

The British Thomson-Houston Co. Ltd.,
Crown House, Aldwych,
London, W.C.2.

AS THESE WORDS

are written no man can tell if Christmas will find Europe at Peace, but your generous impulse, kindly thought and goodwill, expressed by your gift to the Church Army this Christmas will make such a difference to so many of the needy. Please cross cheques "Barclays & Co. Church Army," and send to the Rev. H. H. TREACHER, General Secretary and Head, **THE CHURCH ARMY** Headquarters, 55, Bryanston Street, London, W.1. (Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940).

10/114

**Healthy dogs
make
good companions**



BOB MARTIN'S
Condition Powder Tablets
keep dogs fit.

RATTRAY'S 7 RESERVE TOBACCO

Many handsome letters of appreciation of Rattray's service have been received even during the war period. Some say thanks for prompt attention given, some praise the packings—all give unstinted thanks for the excellence of the tobacco and the pleasure they get from it. For Rattray's it is a great joy to know they have so many enthusiastic friends.

A customer writes from Bradford—
"As confirmed pipe smokers, we think your tobacco absolutely first class."

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TOBACCO BLENDER
Perth, Scotland
Price 49/6 per lb. Post Paid
Send 12/6 for sample 1-lb.
tin. Post Free.

VAPEX

The modern treatment
for Colds

A Drop on your Handkerchief
Like many other good things
Vapex had to make way for
more imperatively urgent needs.
Throughout the war pharmaceutical work of national importance has taken and must take first place. Normal conditions will bring a return of Vapex

THOMAS KERFOOT & CO. LTD.
Vale of Bardsley, Lancs., England

Your Hair Brush rebristled—

I specialise in replacing bristles in worn brushes. Forward your Ivory, Silver or Ebony brushes, when quotation will be sent by return of post.

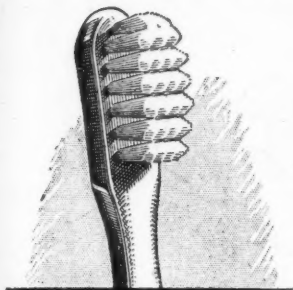
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**Wartime
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Purchase Tax 3d each
Obtainable only from Retailers.
JAMES NEILL & CO. (Sheffield) LTD.

EVERYBODY WANTS A...



Tek

TOOTHBRUSH

The strictly limited supplies are being fairly distributed — but disappointments are unavoidable.

SO DON'T BLAME YOUR CHEMIST

BRISTLES; 2/- Plus Purchase Tax 5d.
NYLON; 1/6 Plus Purchase Tax 4d.

Made and guaranteed by
JOHNSON & JOHNSON (Gr. Britain) Ltd.,
Slough & Gargrave T.15

The largest parachutes
carrying the heaviest
loads are made of

'Fortisan'
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THE WORLD'S STRONGEST YARN

Strength combined with
minimum space and weight

—a pioneer product of

BRITISH CELANESE LTD.

Textiles . . Plastics . . Chemicals



*A wine that has all
the character & bouquet
of those fine vintages
which gave to Port its
Historic vogue*

CHAPLINS
CONCORD
PORT

Fourteen and Six per bottle

CHAPLINS  EST'D. 1867



A RARE TREAT THESE DAYS



No superlative could convey the truly delightful quality of VAMOUR. Skilful blending of the choice imported wines and Selected Herbs of which it is composed make VAMOUR the vermouth for the discriminating. Regrettably short supply at present, but contact your Wine Merchant—you may be fortunate. Remember, every occasion with VAMOUR is a special one.

VAMOUR
THE True VERMOUTH

Produced by
VERMOUTIERS (London) LTD.
40, PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1.

It's Obvious...

that sound and thermal insulation will be prime considerations in post-war building.* That will mean—a big part for CELOTEX, most efficient in both these qualities. Celotex board has great structural strength. Its warm finish is pleasing and it can be painted or decorated in many ways.

* House Construction (Post-War Building Studies No. 1), published for the Ministry of Works 1944 (the 'Burt Report'), which ranks them as basic requirements Nos. 3 and 4.

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INSULATING, BUILDING AND
HARD BOARDS

CELOTEX LIMITED
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Special
VINEGARS



Tarragon
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etc.

Made from Natural Herbs
Matured in Genuine Malt
Vinegar

AND SOLD ONLY IN BOTTLE
DUFRAIS & CO. LTD.
21, St. James Sq., London, S.W.1



Rationing for Oliver Twist

Dickens—creator of the immortal *Oliver Twist* who asked for more—would have made even "points" and "zoning" sound entertaining. He lived in an age of peace and plenty when people could buy Romary Biscuits as they liked. But in spite of present-day restrictions, Romary quality is of the same high order, and we look forward to the time when we can say "yes" when people ask for—more.

ROMARY

'Tunbridge Wells' Biscuits

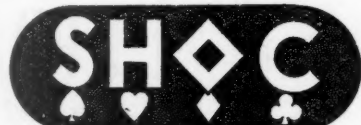


Clearing the Way! Nothing escapes the keenness of Gillette. Through beach-head troubles or home-front stubbles, Gillette smooths the path. The Blue Gillette is not 'demobbed' yet. But the Standard Gillette still detects the enemy wherever it bristles — on the home front!

Gillette in battledress

Gillette "Standard" Blades (plain steel) 2d each, including Purchase Tax. Fit all Gillette razors, old or new.

If you can't always get them, remember they're worth trying for! Production still restricted.



**A NEW PARTY GAME FOR
ANY NUMBER OF PLAYERS**

by Chad Valley



Operated
by an ordinary
pack of cards, prices
rise and fall as players
buy and sell. Price **8/6**



BY APPOINTMENT TO H.M. THE QUEEN

The Chad Valley Co. Ltd.
HARBORNE, BIRMINGHAM



This is the song
thousands of children will sing at
Salvation Army Christmas parties.
Help to make the words come true
for them and for many lonely old
folk by sending a gift now to
General Carpenter, 101, Queen
Victoria Street, London, E.C.4.

Where there's need - there's



The Salvation Army!



PUNCH

Or

The London Charivari



Vol. CCVII No. 5421

December 13 1944

Charivaria

RECENT military reports suggest that if the weather doesn't soon start behaving itself our men will begin to wish they hadn't taken the trouble to liberate it.

An M.P. sings comic songs to his own ukulele accompaniment. Well, that's one way of getting to Paris. Join Ensa.

Despite the unprecedented wet weather that has prevailed throughout Italy it is impossible to get a clear view of the political situation in Rome until the dust settles.

A Good Start

"Nov. 20, at — Hospital, to DOROTHY (née —) and GEORGE —, a daughter (Valerie Irene, bath satisfactory)." *Liverpool paper.*



Hitler is said to be so ill that many of his generals are now able to take out their own life insurance policies.

Portable garages on wheels are suggested as a temporary expedient for suburban motorists after the war. It is thought that their wives will find it much jollier being able to back the garage on to the car.

Many business men are to be found among the crowds of boys at railway stations "spotting" railway engines. They find it a change from standing in bus queues, being spotted by bus-drivers.

Planning experts seem unanimous about London being too big. Some of them have a job getting out of it even on paper.



Take Cover!

"A British firm—Lindsay Parkinson and Co.—has secured a £2,000,000 contract from the Egyptian Government for strengthening the Ensa Barrage in Upper Egypt."—*Ceylon paper.*

German citizens are forbidden to send Christmas greetings to the Fuehrer. For ourselves, we shan't even wish him a New Year.

Strikes, riots, and unrest have been reported from several places outside the combatant zones. It's nice to think the non-belligerents are keeping the peace intact for us while we get on with the war.

All the members of a Public School Rugby fifteen are to help with the Christmas rush at the local post office this year. Their hooker is said to be able to heel the most obstinate parcel out of the scrum more quickly than any three regular sorters put together.



St. George

AND now the knight had drawn his lance
 Out of the body of the dragon,
 And stayed with smiling countenance
 To quaff refreshment from his flagon;
 The maiden, freed from tyrant powers,
 Came dancing lightfoot through the forest,
 And crowned his head with all the flowers
 Known to the enterprising florist.

"Put off your armour, noble knight,
 And let me lead you through the village
 And show you every ravaged site
 Where once the brute was wont to pillage."
 He gave her food, he gave her wine,
 The bells rang out from every steeple,
 "And now," he murmured, "maiden mine,
 Take me along to meet your people."

"Nay, not so fast," the maiden spoke
 (A sterner look replaced the dimple),
 "You scarcely understand my folk,
 And wandering knights are far too simple.
 Nay, not so soon," the maiden cried,
 "Before the peace-time celebrations
 Give me the dagger at your side,
 I want to murder some relations." EVOE.

Uneasy Waiting

THEY say that on a long sea voyage a man may take such a dislike to a fellow passenger, to whom he may never have spoken, that even the vast spaces of a *Queen Mary* are not big enough to hold the two of them. In such cases, they tell me, the man who is doing the hating will adopt almost any stratagem to avoid meeting his enemy, hiding in lifeboats and so on, and always walking round the decks in the same direction as the other man, or even in extreme cases coming up for air at night through the ventilator shafts instead of using the companion-way.

I am not sure that I believe all this. People exaggerate. But it interests me because of a man I hated very violently the other day at Haukley Junction and because a railway junction is like a ship in some ways, though ill-supplied, as everyone knows, with lifeboats.

Haukley Junction, as its name implies, is a Category B station. In Category A I put those stations which have obviously been built because a number of people will find it convenient to mount into, or dismount from, trains at that point; Manchester for instance, or Waterloo. Category C includes all those stations that have just been spaced more or less evenly along the line without reference to anything. They are there partly because passengers in express trains would not feel they were getting value for money unless there were plenty of stations for the trains not to stop at, and partly because there would otherwise be a great surplus of station-masters, which leads to rioting and discontent. Category B stations occupy a sort of half-and-half position. You find them wherever a side line branches off from the main line, or at any rate within half

a mile or so of the spot. There is a reason for this as a matter of fact. Obviously, where there is a branch line you have got to have points, and points mean a man in a waistcoat in a signal-box. Now, as anybody in the Army can tell you, you can't have a man in a waistcoat just out by himself in the countryside, belonging to nobody. He has to be attached, as we say. And the obvious thing to attach him to is a station, where he can get his pay and rations and so on. So you get a place like Haukley Junction.

Walking up and down the platform at Haukley is not generally rated high among the pleasures of the senses. Those who have waited at the Junction for two hours or more (and few have waited less) agree that the last two hundred journeys up and down are the worst. It is a dull man who cannot pass the first half-hour lightly enough, whether by attempting to get from end to end of the platform in exactly one hundred and twenty paces or by pausing to read a by-law each time he passes the Company's notice board. There is also a certain satisfaction in harassing a shuffling sort of porter-chap who appears from time to time.

"What's wrong with your clock?" I say to him.

"Naught's wrong with clock."

"But it says twenty to seven."

"Ar!"

"And what's more it's been saying twenty to seven ever since I got here."

"And how long mid that be?"

"Hours."

"I bin 'ere thirty-eight years."

"That doesn't alter the fact that there's something wrong with your clock."

"There's naught wrong with clock. She wants windin', mebbe."

This bit of dialogue takes up a couple of minutes, after which I do another forty turns up and down before accosting him again.

"Why don't you wind her up then?" I ask.

"Not my job to wind 'er up," he says.

"Well, whose job is it?"

"Dunno," he says. "Not mine."

I think about this for another turn or two, growing rapidly more incensed. The man seems to me to have no sense of responsibility.

"Do you mean to say nobody ever winds her up?" I ask him.

"Must 'ave," he says—"didn't, she wouldn't ever 'ave got to seven-twenty."

"She hasn't," I pointed out. "Only twenty to."

"Same thing," he says; and we leave it at that.

I wouldn't call this good conversation, in the accepted after-dinner sense of the term, but it gets through a useful five minutes. It also serves to take my mind off the insufferable chap I mentioned earlier on.

This chap is also waiting for some train or other (not mine, I hope), and at first he sits quietly in a corner, so unobtrusively in fact that I fail to notice him. This is rather awkward, because when one is trying to cover the length of a platform in exactly one hundred and twenty paces it is necessary at times to take very long steps and at other times to take very short steps indeed. This is not really cheating, provided one keeps the pace even (by "pace" I mean velocity of course), and to do that the long steps have to be taken slowly and the short steps pretty fast. Naturally, to anyone who doesn't know what one is trying to do the result looks a bit silly.

I have just taken three exceptionally long steps, as a matter of fact, when I first catch sight of this fellow, and



SHADOW IN THE SOUTH



"... now I 'olds the fort while YOU nips in. . . . I've never missed a train yet!"

from that moment I hate him with a very bitter hatred. I do my best to take it out of the porter about that clock.

Meanwhile the hateful chap gets up and starts to walk up and down the platform. The inevitable result of this is that I meet him a good deal more often than I care about. He wears a long grey raincoat and a purple muffler and has a way of staring at one as he goes by which is rather putting-off. At about our hundredth encounter I begin to feel it impossible that we should go on meeting without exchanging a word; I also feel equally strongly that once the ice is broken we shall have to speak every time we meet, which will be intolerable. I therefore fall back on such expedients as pretending to consult the clock (which still says twenty to seven), picking imaginary bits of cotton off my coat lapel as we pass, or even glancing up in a puzzled way at the platform roof as though surprised to see it covered with Michelangelo paintings (which in fact it isn't).

Of course I am not always approaching the man. If I can contrive to meet him just after he has made his turn at the end of a stretch, I am behind him for the next lap, and that, though I dislike looking at his bottleneck shoulders and loathsome muffler, is the best position to be in. But the time comes when he has turned the tables on me, so that it is I who have barely turned round when we meet, and there he is behind me. This is terrible. The thought of his dreadful eye at my back robs me of my natural balance. I seem to have acquired a shuffling sort of walk, as if one leg was shorter than the other, and I am bothered

by an unreasonable conviction that the lining is hanging out of my hat at the back. I take the hat off to make certain, and the porter who happens to look out of his cubby-hole at that moment says "Arternoon!" in a surprised tone of voice. I now wish that the lining was in fact hanging out so that my reason for taking the hat off would be a little more apparent. But it isn't. I rarely saw a lining more secure. So the best I can do is to turn the hat round in my hand in a wondering way, brush the crown gently on my sleeve, drop it, kick it inadvertently off the platform and dive down after it on to the railway line, where I remain blushing painfully and hoping to get run over.

The chances of getting run over at Haukley Junction, however, are few and far between. If it had been the *Queen Mary* I could at least have jumped overboard.

H. F. E.

"The Japanese devised a special torture for Brooklyn soldiers—they broadcast reports at intervals that 'Dem bums' had lost another ball game.

The story is from Pte. Manuel V. Lopez, recently returned from the China-Burma-India theatre.

After a day of hard fighting against Jap marines, he said, the Brooklyn fans would crouch in their foxholes. Then a clear voice speaking perfect English would float through the night:

'Hey Jonesy, didya hear the Giants blasted dem bums today 15 to 2?'—*Montreal paper*.

Almost Johnsonian, what?

Our Open Forum

III—Land Policy

Mr. Oswald C. Bottislow, who makes this pronounced contribution to our series of articles on Reconstruction, bears a striking physical resemblance to Mr. Edward G. Robinson whom he has never even met. He describes himself as "unassuming, kindly, passionately fond of Elgar, and of private means." Yet it is through his books that he is most widely known. These include: "The Boy Soprano and Other Tales" (1917), "Guilty Gingerbread" (1918), "Gussie by Fanlight" (1920), "Septimus Jones—Radical" (1923), "The Plain-song Murders" (1933), "Roger the Lodger" (1940), "Your P.G." (1941). Since 1936 he has been Permanent Under-Secretary to the Blanchley Watch Committee. He is fifty-two, loud in his praises and very tantamount.

MY friends, let me tell you a story. At 2 A.M. on September 10th 1940 the bells of St. Cloud's, Blanchley, announced to the countryside that the invasion of England had started. At H.Q., L.D.V., there was great excitement. We polished our broom-handles, adjusted our arm-bands and stood at the ready. Dr. Fidget made a very short speech.

"Men of Blanchley," he said, "the Hun is dropping from the skies over our fair land. Now is the time for action. We will fight him on the Permian, we will fight him on the Keuper Marls—aye, and we will fight him on the Pleistocene and Recent. Gentlemen, we will not rest until the last invader is removed from the Oolite Beds of Blanchley."

Parochial? Yes, I suppose so. Premature? Yes, I know. But what courage, my friends, and what a lesson for these difficult times when the soil of Britain is under the auctioneer's hammer.

The truth is that the land of Britain has many enemies—within and without its gates. It was Professor Slagnotch who wrote: "There'll always be an England if the erosion that destroys 0017 per cent. of the South Coast every year can be prevented." It was Hervey C. Gooseflesh who said: "Our greatest invisible export is our sub-soil—the very chemical substance of life in Britain. For more than a hundred years we have supplied the world with goods manufactured from the parent rock of Britain. No country can live for ever by exporting itself. Let us turn therefore to economic nationalism as the only policy for our times. We must not put our cousins overseas before our gneisses."

I turn now to the thorny subjects of compensation and betterment. Compensation is a sum of money promised to a person in lieu of expectations. The margin by which the promise falls short of expectations is called lack of consideration and may vary between very much and a not insignificant amount. Compensation is rather like post-war credits but slower. Betterment is a heavy tax on people who might possibly have funds to develop the windfall opportunities on which the tax is levied if they were not called upon to pay the betterment tax.

These definitions are not perfect but they are the best I can do without putting the other side of the case.

What changes can be made in the ownership and use of land that are entirely consistent with the maintenance of the *status quo*? Before admitting our inability to answer this question let us examine some of the difficulties involved. It is obvious that:

(1) The glorious chequerboard pattern of the English allotment must be preserved;

(2) Temporary houses should have built-in period furniture, for those who prefer it, operated on the slot-machine and hire-purchase principles;

(3) These houses should not at any time in the future be converted into week-end cottages for the semi-attached;

(4) The red tape which produced so much ribbon-development before the war must be hand-picked and bleached.

My friends, have you seen these temporary houses? They are not bad—not at all bad. Actually the differences between them and the ordinary fabrications in brick are not wide. Each type is equally accessible to roundsmen and canvassers; each has a rateable value and can be given either a name or a number. The Portal is a very neat job, well sprung and roomy. It should seat seven comfortably.

I saw the blueprints of a new type of prefabricated house a few weeks ago. It was very distinctive. The walls were done in oak panelling with a minimum of carving. The windows were late Gothic in shape but of unstained glass. The fan-vaulting and delicate stone tracery of the ceiling were very fine indeed. I forget now exactly what this house was called—I think it was "The Commons."

I could go on like this for hours but I see my time is up. You must go on talking. You must tell us what to build and where. You must tell Uthwatt to do with the land.

A Matter of Opinion

"DEATH FOR VICHY POLICE PERFECT"

Heading in Sunday paper.



JWILLS

"... our conductor in to-day's lunch-time concert ..."

Board Meeting

WE are now all present and waiting only for the secretary to bring in the chairman. No doubt he is just finishing off the minutes which he always writes before the meeting, so that he has the script in front of him and then if any of us says the wrong thing he can nudge the chairman and get it withdrawn.

There is an atmosphere of tenseness in the room, as we are all itching to get at the blotting-paper. For many of us busy City men board meetings are the only times when we can really get down to our drawing.

It is rather awe-inspiring to think of the concentration of commercial and financial genius around this table. There is not one of us here who could not sign his own cheque for ten thousand pounds. And in several cases it would probably go through.

Mr. Grindle and Mr. Parkstone are discussing their directorship collections and shyly hinting at swaps. Mr. Antling, having done all the sums in the Statement of Accounts in the vain hope of catching the secretary out, is marking his card. So far as I can see he is going to put his shirt on "To Consider Directors' Fees," with a small saver on "To Approve Programme of Post-War Policy."

Mr. Bakenshaw, as usual, asks me if I know anything and I answer quickly that I have been watching South American Rails, because I know from experience that he is a reasonable man and will take that as a fair excuse. He says that he does not watch South American Rails himself. He used to, when he was young and had the time, but now he has a man to do it for him.

He asks me what I think of Kinkajous and I say that from a rumour or two that I have heard it seems as if the situation might be interesting. He asks me which rumour I am thinking of and is it the one about the concessions. I say, no, that I had not thought anything of that; it was something else which was rumoured in strict confidence. He says that if it is the one about the chairman's brother he is surprised that I have heard it, as he heard that they were not going to have that rumour at all, at least until after the end of the financial year, but that it just shows that rumour is a two-edged weapon.

The chairman and secretary have taken their places and the proceedings have begun with the short collect about the minutes of the previous meeting. I am back at the old

problem of how a cow's hind legs go. My cows have improved a lot since I have been a director, but there is still something unreal about the hind legs. Perhaps I should specialize in busts of cows.

The secretary has read all the sums and answers in the Statement of Accounts and we have had to give him ten out of ten. Mr. Glasswood points out that we are still making money, which is most unsatisfactory as we shall have to pay it out in E.P.T., but the chairman says that it is quite all right as we have before us a scheme for losing so much money on post-war planning that it will mop up all the profits and probably qualify us for something out of Social Insurance, so everyone cheers up again.

The secretary has read his report and the chairman has dared us to ask questions. Mr. Parkstone points out that there is no mention in the report of our Scottish laundry interests, and we all wonder how the secretary will get over that one, but he just gets up and says that we have no Scottish laundry interests. Mr. Parkstone says that in that case it is all right and he will not press the matter; he must be thinking of one of his other companies. He thought it right to raise the question because it is only at board meetings that you can get points like that thrashed out.

Mr. Clutterfield says that it is a coincidence that we should be thinking of taking up laundry interests, as he has just become chairman of a company which does a good deal of something or other with laundries and it might make an interesting tie-up. The secretary intervenes to point out that laundries would not come within the scope of our Memorandum and Articles, but Mr. Clutterfield thinks that it might be possible to arrange for some further interchange of directorships, so that even the chairman turns on the secretary and he is instructed to prepare a full report. You can see that this makes him mad as he will now have to add a bit to the minutes.

If you have the cow scratching its back against a tree you can get over the hind leg difficulty, but this means a lot of extra detail work on the tree. Mr. Hempstall, on my right, is doing snakes, which is a cowardly way out, especially as most of his are swimming.

The chairman is now talking about post-war policy and I have just thought of trying a cow standing in a

pond. He says that we must visualize an era after the war of close collaboration with our allies, and that is when we will have to watch ourselves. He thinks that it will only be by careful planning that this country will be steered through the post-war period and into the next pre-war period with its resources intact, and anyhow the only alternative to post-war planning is to pay the money over in E.P.T.

We are now discussing Directors' Fees at last and everyone has stopped drawing and started looking determined, but it is all right and we all heartily approve of the new suggestions.

The chairman has invited us all to lunch and I have just thought of the way that the hind legs should really go.

A. M. C.

o o

These We Scrambled Into

IT is all very well criticizing Mr. Morrison, but what about the overcoat and boots he is giving me? Couponless, too, unless some department turns peculiar again.

By aggregation is how I came into possession of that uniform. Catching each part as it fell off the machine. We thought it would never arrive, and felt left out a little. There we were, steaming with such knowledge that mustard gas smelt like garlic, and nothing to show for it.

It was a benign day in late spring when our senior warden, who is also the local undertaker, came round to measure me. It was rather an eerie experience since he made jottings with his professional expression and once, when he opened his mouth to speak and then seemed to recover himself, I imagined he had been on the point of absently murmuring "Shall we say polished oak?"

About six weeks later I was notified to attend headquarters and draw the overcoat. I thought it was too long, but the issuing warden said they were being worn long. Outside, though, I was still unconvinced as, apart from almost sweeping the ground, I could only just see the tips of my fingers beyond the sleeves and the collar appeared to be more of a small cape. It was one of those days Thomas Hardy described so well, when the atmosphere seemed to move owing to the intense heat. As I passed through the streets I attracted a modicum of attention from people more lightly clad, but at last I reached home and

my family contrived to draw me from the apparatus.

The boiler-suits arrived next. The first few I tried were far too long and the issuing warden, a most conscientious man, ran several times up and down a lot of stairs before discovering that he had read a poor 29" as 39". For a man who was working voluntarily he apologized most profusely. Scarcely had I become practised at entering the boiler-suit before I was told to return it as the battle-dresses and berets were in stock. I went for these at a busy period. The scene reminded me of demobilization following the end of the last war, when I rashly elected for a suit and eventually received one the coat of which had seven buttons and I never wore it without feeling like the old Duke of Ptarmigan. Wardens who for years had known no other than bespoke tailoring were objecting up and down the place, and the issuing warden's arm was on the wall with his brow resting on it. A great drawback was that the only mirror in the room was less than a foot square and affixed in a bad light. Before it for a moment I suddenly realized that what appeared to be the reflection of the slow-combustion stove was myself in a beret. The blouse was the success of the ensemble. I am prepared to champion from any platform the extension of the battle-dress blouse into civilian life. In a hurry, one has only to beckon and it floats on. It possesses many outlandish buttons, but the great thing is that nothing happens if the fastening of a few is overlooked, and subconscious awareness of this vastly restores the nerves. Its pockets preclude the open carrying of parcels. Unfortunately the purists began wearing collars and ties to their blouses and were multitudinously followed. Man is a conventional animal.

I think that I drew the boots next. By now I had the feeling that a faint channel was worn in the pavement between my own front door and our headquarters. A new issuing warden, an elderly, imperturbable and much-beribboned man, handed me a pair and mentioned that his predecessor was improving. I said that I did not know he had been ill. Nothing very serious, he announced, and the ice-caps were now being dispensed with. I said that the left boot seemed to pinch slightly. He said that if I had not walked that right in three months an exchange would be made, and he touched on the very early days of the Army, when boots were utterly standardized and there were no right and left feet. I thought that the boots

were too squat and I should prefer a slimmer boot with the same play inside. He sympathized but said that he was out of broad pairs that looked narrow. I regarded the goose-flesh exterior with disrelish. He said that he had a smooth pair handy in a larger size, but I declined them upon finding that I could move forward an inch without disturbing the boots. He accompanied me to the door observing that he was sorry he had no wrapping material as he had always fancied making one of those natty loops and smartly severing the string. As he bade me good day he remarked that in his time he had been a quarter-master-sergeant. I almost turned and thanked him for his leniency.

Well, he will now have his overcoat and boots for keeps. So shall we all. In all probability we shall have the rest of the equipment, although some of it may prove embarrassing. The whistle will come in handy for when anyone locally is being murdered in the night, but I can imagine nothing for the bleach ointment. Neither, other than taking the post of the man who drops in the water when the bull's-eye is hit on pleasure beaches, can I think of any use for the gas-protective clothing.

Scramble for Pennies

"CHANCELLOR'S SAVINGS BROADCAST"
Heading in evening paper.





"Now which did you say this was—the battleship or the searchlight battery?"

The Phoney Phleet

LVII—H.M.S. "Dactyl"

GEORGE ROLAND was a poet who Considered that the Navy would Be rather more conducive to His muse than, say, for instance, could The Army, N.F.S., or R. A.F., and I agree thus far.

But later on when he was made The captain of the *Dactyl* he Permitted his civilian trade To influence his work, i.e., He wrote his signals out in verse— Pentameter, or even worse.

To give you an example, when He'd sunk a U-boat, he'd say "For The First Sea Lord. We're merry Men Because we've bagged a Jerry." Or To take another case, he'd wire, "The outlook's dire. The Ship's on fire."

Technique of course was faultless and A signal never went without His checking closely that it scanned And that the rhymes were pure. About The latter point he was precise; No signalman made false rhymes twice.

In spite—in fact, perhaps, because. Of this he did quite well; and by And large H.M.S. *Dactyl* was The apple of their Lordships' eye Until that Saturday the 1st Of June on which the bubble burst.

That afternoon the Twenty-third Sea Lord was paying visits in The *Dactyl's* base, and sent George word That he would come and have some gin On board. This ranks, you understand, Not lower than a Royal Command.

George thought he ought to make some sign Of welcome, and sat down to write A tactful signal. "Mighty fine! You're welcome an' You'll stay the night. Assume you can." He signed it, then He gave it to the signalmen.

Trained to poetic purity, They turned the heat on every word, And, sighting the apostrophe, Were quite convinced that George had erred. They changed the "an" at once to "and," And, naturally, "can" to "canned."

How sad to see the fulgent star Arise, grow bright and then expire! How sad to change "R.N.V.R." For lesser pendants like "Esquire"— To swop the hat for one less chic! How . . . And, in George's case, how quick!

Astronomical Figures

ONE hundred and eighty-six million miles, look at it how you like (it is most impressive, I think, if you take up a position a few million miles away and cast your eye along it lengthwise), is a lot of miles.

As a character miscellaneous but on the whole erratically informed, I had never even heard of this particular stretch of country before I found it in a book, *From Atoms to Stars*, by Martin Davidson, D.Sc., F.R.A.S., just issued at 15/-, by Hutchinson's among their Scientific and Technical Publications. This book is not aimed at the Scientific and Technical public: it is (I quote the Preface) "intended to provide a general outline of the most up-to-date knowledge of the heavenly bodies," and "the mathematics and physics required . . . are elementary—about the standard attained by those leaving school." I wouldn't exactly say that I have read Dr. Davidson's book, but to have got even one hundred and eighty-six million miles into it is something.

One hundred and eighty-six million miles, it appears from an explanatory diagram on page 116, is the length of the base-line used for measuring the distance of a star from the earth. As far as I can make out from a rapid meticulous glance, it is the diameter of the earth's orbit. Look—the earth moves round the sun in a circle, right? The sun is ninety-three million miles away, right? (You

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"If they had a programme called 'To STOP You Talking' there'd be some sense in it."

don't have to answer.) Then the diameter of the orbit, drawn from one position of the earth, through the sun in the centre, to another position of the earth on the opposite side—bless me, you know what a diameter is, surely!—is one hundred and eighty-six million miles, and it's the base of the triangle the apex of which is the star whose distance you want to measure. You find the angle of the star at each position of the earth and work it out by trig. Go to it.

The book explains, in fact, how the astronomers perform all those questionable feats of discovering the size, and the weight, and the temperature, and the state of the political parties and all the other statistics concerning a star you or I might have been tempted to think distant enough not to worry about; that was what made me look at it in the first place, for I always want to keep nagging at the conjurer till I find out how the trick was done.

But the snag is that the whole business is absolutely riddled with mathematics.

For instance, consider what Appendix XII calls "the ability of a gaseous mass to condense into a planet." You or I, unastronomical reader, would be inclined to say that this was a simple matter: either the gaseous mass is able to condense into a planet, or (on the other hand) it is not. We do not worry about any gaseous mass that may be wandering about half-condensed, a giddy harumfrodite, annoying everybody with its silly feeble-minded grin and talking like Finnegan in the radio show "Duffy's Tavern." But Appendix XII has got the whole thing taped: the conditions of condensation are

$$m > 9c^3 / 2^{5/2} \pi^{1/2} G^{3/2} \rho^{1/2}$$

and you can put *that* in your nebula and condense it. (While it is condensing let us both reflect on the standard of mathematics we attained on leaving school, and rolled off again so soon afterwards.)

The author's attitude towards mathematics as a subject is a thought-provoking blend of the off-hand and the cautious. After saying that readers should have no

difficulty in following the methods of computation, the Preface goes on: "The author always uses a computing machine for his calculations, but if readers are not similarly equipped the results can be checked by a slide rule or logarithms."

The odd point here is the suggestion that I should even want to check the author's results. When I see such a statement (page 73) as

$$\text{"Hence for Mars } k = 6 \cdot 272^3 \times 10^{-12} / (8 \cdot 731 \times 10^{-4})^3,"$$

my instinct is not to check it but to pass by on the other side, anxiously, less somebody should ask me to. It may (I feel) be necessary to say such things in the course of explaining how to find the weight of Mars, but one's only decent course is to let them pass unnoticed.

Perhaps I ought now to mention atoms: the book begins with atoms, as its title would suggest, and works up to astronomy a bit later. But in my researches I was brought up short (page 17) by an account of the bombardment of atoms by α -particles. It seems that an experimenter airily referred to as "Blackett, one of Rutherford's students," bombarded ordinary air in a Wilson's Cloud Chamber and photographed what went on. Now comes the pay-off: "After Blackett had taken 23,000 photographs he found that eight of these showed head-on collisions of α -particles with the nuclei of nitrogen atoms."

Eight in 23,000. How's that for action?

The late F. P. Adams once wrote of a "wearisome acquaintance" of his who always knew the discreditable inside story of everything and who on being told that Betelgeuse was twenty-seven million times as big as the sun observed "I heard different." If I cared to make my observations hotly topical and earn a good mark from the M.O.I., or perhaps rather the O.W.I., I could tie this up with the one hundred and eighty-six million miles we have travelled in this misleading but informative article and point out that under a democracy nobody will shoot you if you get the sum wrong, but I should probably become involved in argument about every man's right to his own computing machine.

The eternal silence of these infinite spaces terrifies me, anyway.

R. M.



"No, Madam, 'ow I procured 'im is a secret between 'im and me."



"Of course it's different for officers."

Invitation to the Dance

THIS note is addressed to all men of my age-group who may be lured to a dance at Christmas.

Friends, don't on any account leave the bar. Well, anyway, don't go near the dance floor until the last waltz—which is now rather like a fast polka.

Friends, the other dance of to-day is not for you. Do you remember how we danced in the 'thirties? Do you remember the rumba? The gloriously hot syncopated foot-work of the fox-trot? The mad intoxication of the blues? You do? Well try to preserve those memories.

The dance of to-day—I will describe it. How many muscles has the human body? Good—that's right—about a dozen fewer than are used in the dance of to-day. Most of these muscles, friends, are ones that you have forgotten all about. They are shockingly stiff and very easily bruised.

Do you grimace easily? You have to in the dance of to-day. You must

be able to register every emotion with the speed of light—and without losing your chewing-gum.

Do you know the language of the dance of to-day? Do such cries as "Bounce it, Charlie, with a solid four," "Bring it," "Make it moan, brother," and "Oh, mamma, gimme—I'm head-in' it out" mean anything to you? I thought not.

In the dance of to-day the girl stands facing you at about four yards. She is grimacing ecstatically. Her blood is getting on fire. She taps her foot while it kindles. Then, quite suddenly, she bursts into flame, gives off some such cry as "Sister, watch me sizzle!" and advances. Her movement is reminiscent of those queer, angular, distorted figures that decorate the ancient sarcophagi of Egypt. She charges, feints and disappears round your left side. Before there is time to turn you receive a stinging blow in the back from a knee. The next moment your head is levered backwards as the girl completes her forward roll

over your shoulders. The pain is excruciating.

There are other atrocities equally painful and embarrassing. I have said nothing about the high heels that are driven into your stomach or about the elbows that hack unmercifully at your ribs.

If you played rugby as a young man you might be able to stand the physical punishment. But I doubt very much whether you could tolerate the grimaces.

Are we getting old—too old for this lend-lease in reverse?

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"Peter Rabbit" Christmas Cards

WE are asked by the organizers of the "Peter Rabbit" Fund to say that owing to the large demand for Christmas Cards there has been a slight delay in reprinting, but that they will dispatch all orders as soon as possible.



GOVERNMENT—OR GUNS

"The ballot-box is the gift that I came to bring."

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, December 5th.—House of Commons: Santa Claus in Trouble.

Wednesday, December 6th.—House of Commons: Trade Follows the—War.

Thursday, December 7th.—House of Commons: Housing.

Tuesday, December 5th.—Question-time can be a thorn in the flesh of Ministers, or a thorn in the flesh of those (like your scribe) who have to listen from more elevated planes. And ne'er the twain shall—or, at any rate, do—meet. When Ministers are having a bad (or, at least, lively) time, then your scribe's heart rejoices, not in any sadistic spirit, but because "Impressions" are then vivid and acute. When Ministers are having a good time they are apt (or so it seems) to look gloatingly up at your scribe.

To-day was what a Government White Paper would call *Class A*. Thorns fairly bristled in the flesh of Ministers.

Some of them were only little ones, such as Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS's gentle query to Major LLOYD GEORGE, the Fuel Minister (whose 50th birthday was yesterday): "Is every military vehicle in London making a necessary journey?" To which the Major, very properly, replied: "I cannot say!"

Others were (as every chi—er, every *Young Person*—would agree at this season of the year) really important and spiky thorns, like that concerning the current price of toys. Mr. HUGH DALTON, who, as President of the Board of Trade, is sole British agent for the old-established firm of S. Claus (Christmas) Limited, Never-Never Land, was asked whether he knew that toys were of phenomenal price just now, and what he was going to do about it.

Mr. DALTON is not a man who takes this sort of thing lying down. He said aggressively that he had taken special steps to see that the supply of toys was increased, and people should not pay excessive prices, but should report the profiteers to the authorities, who would, after due trial, exact forfeit or fines.

Mr. WILLIAM BROWN, whose sepulchral voice and blandly "cloak-and-dagger" manner give the superficial impression of a Wicked Uncle, showed how wrong impressions can be when he mentioned that (even though "not well-breeched with this world's goods") he had paid nine shillings for a small box of wooden squares covered with rough paint.

An unkind opponent suggested that these were perhaps the political "bricks" Mr. BROWN occasionally drops, but Mr. DALTON mentioned ominously that there had been forty-five successful prosecutions for charging too much for toys, clearly suggesting the figure might well have been forty-six.

Mr. TOM DRIBERG (from Muddy Maldon) wanted a pair of Wellington boots in every country child's stocking—or perhaps it was a country child's stockings in every pair of Wellington boots—and his persistence was partially rewarded when Santa DALTON said



TOYS

"The Government have done their best to increase the supply of toys."

The President of the Board of Trade.

there would be *some*, but not enough for all, just yet.

There were questions about the shortage of paper, and it was assuredly pure coincidence that the next question related to the shortage of leather for shoe repairs. Mr. DALTON admitted both deficiencies.

Then Dr. HADEN GUEST raised the question of the tragic happenings in Athens two days ago, when the Greek police fired on youthful demonstrators, killing several. Grave-faced, Mr. CHURCHILL answered the question himself. It was deplorable, said he, that an event like this could take place in Athens scarcely a month after its liberation. But the British troops were acting, and would act, to prevent bloodshed. They could not have armed bands going around, supporting some particular ideology or body, and not

owing allegiance to the Greek Government. What form of Government the Greek people chose was no concern of ours, but we were determined to see that law and order were maintained.

Turning down an application for permission to raise the matter on the adjournment as one of urgent public importance, Mr. Speaker ruled that no Minister in the British Commons could be made answerable for the action of the Greek police in shooting down Greeks in Greece.

So, sadly, the House left the matter there for the moment, grieved that a nation that had written its name so large in letters of gold in the recent annals of martial fame should be so rent.

On his way out Mr. CHURCHILL paused to have a good old-fashioned (if extremely disorderly) "barge" with Mr. SHINWELL across the Table. Mr. ROBERT HUDSON, the Minister of Agriculture, perfect gentleman that he is, stopped politely in his reading of a statement on farm prices so as not to interrupt the private row. It went on merrily—well, it went *on*, anyway—for some time, and then Mr. CHURCHILL walked out. Mr. SHINWELL fired a few verbal shots after him, which whistled harmlessly over his head, but seemed to strike Brigadier HARVEY WATT, the Premier's Parliamentary Private Secretary, newly-back from a severe bout of influenza. They seemed to strike *him* as funny.

There ensued (as lady novelists used to put it) some more debate on the Loyal Address, mostly about Soci—dash it!—*National Insurance*.

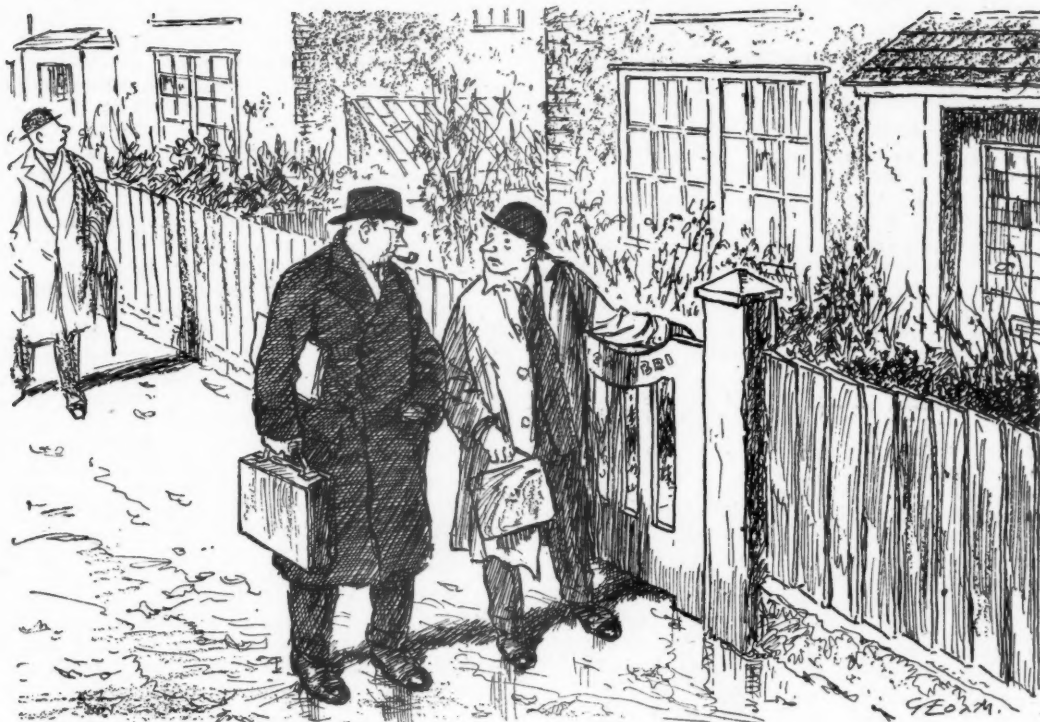
There is one piece of history that must find its place in these pages. Mr. CHURCHILL, who is a man of many surprises, sprang another by announcing that he had "not previously made the acquaintance" of the good Scottish word "*outwith*."

With that thoroughness which is his, he had looked it up and explained (to the wonderment of English and Scots alike—although probably for entirely different reasons) that it meant "*outside the scope of*."

As one Scot commented: "What he would have made of the '*outwith the ambit of our remit*' beloved of canny Scottish committees, goodness knows!"

And to complete this page of history, let it be recorded that Mr. CHURCHILL was once Member for Dundee.

Wednesday, December 6th.—The Hunt for Crinks was the feature of to-day's proceedings in the Commons. As a High Court Judge—or Dr. JOAD—might say: "Who, or what, is (or are) Crinks?"



"I'd ask you in for pot luck, old boy, if it didn't mean the fowls going short of scraps."

"Crinks" is the nickname of Mr. HARCOURT JOHNSTONE, Secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade, and, as the subject of debate was overseas trade, Members took the view that his presence ought to be requested. But Crinks did not appear. Mr. SHINWELL and others asked for him, again and again, in a crescendo of urgency. Mr. DALTON, Mr. JOHNSTONE's Departmental boss, promised that "steps were being taken to procure him."

Whips and others scattered in the hunt, and in the end, to cries of "Yoicks!" and "View-halloo!" the Strange Case of the Missing Minister was solved.

Crinks looked entirely unperturbed. Indeed, no one has ever seen him perturbed.

The debate consisted of demands for Government aid in the building up of overseas markets after the war, because (as Mr. CHURCHILL put it) without exports we cannot live. But some wanted lots of controls and Orders and restrictions, while others thought that the fewer there were the better.

Each side said its say, and confuted the other's say, and in the end the

matter was left where it had been. But these general talks do a lot of good.

Mr. EDEN, at Question-time, made the House's collective mouth water by mentioning 26,890 metric tons of bananas. But, "unhappily," these had not arrived in Britain. Why, your scribe could not hear. The House resumed an expression appropriate to such news.

Thursday, December 7th.—There was what that eminent luminary of the judicial Bench, Mr. Muddlecombe, would call a "to-do" about Housing. Everybody seemed to take the view that there were not enough houses. Nearly everybody took the view that

the Government was not doing enough about it, and not doing what it was doing fast enough.

A dissenter from this second view was, as might be expected, Mr. DUNCAN SANDYS, Minister of Works, who is now to take charge of housing and the repair of bomb damage. He said (in effect) that the Government was doing quite a lot about it, and that it was doing it as fast as war conditions permitted. But he agreed (with rather a grim sidelong glance at some of his Ministerial colleagues) that both velocity and extent of the Government's effort might be speeded up. In fact, *would* be speeded up. A competent and informative speech.

The House left Mr. SANDYS in no doubt (if he had been in any) that this question must be tackled with vigour and imagination. And that there must be results.

Miss MEGAN LLOYD GEORGE wittily summed up the whole debate like this: "Our men, when they come back from the Forces, must not find that they have been led up the garden—and that there is no Portal house at the end of it!" That is about it.

In Aid of the Sea Cadet Funds

THE "Victory at Sea" exhibition, organized by the *News Chronicle*, at Dorland Hall, Regent Street, will be open to the public until December 30th, except on Sundays and Christmas and Boxing Days.

At the Play

"VILLAGE WOOING" AND
 "THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS"
 (LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)

FOR Mr. SHAW's purposes in *Village Wooing*, two people make a quorum. (A deck steward is a fleeting wraith.) The woman is known, with majestic simplicity, as Z; the man is A. For an hour, split into three conversations, they talk. They talk on the lounge deck of the *Empress of Patagonia*. They talk, shop-assistant and customer, at a grocer's-cum-post-office in a Wiltshire village. They talk, in the same setting, as assistant and proprietor, and in the last minute of the piece they talk as an engaged couple.

With some dramatists how wearying this would be! How the audience would rasp and fidget and peer into the programme in the hope that another character had blossomed upon the page! The plot is the one about the female of the species who—to coin a phrase—is deadlier than the male. Its guile is in the telling. SHAW's Z deals with A as competently as Ann Whitefield dealt with John Tanner. This is small-talk which holds children from their play, veterans from the chimney-corner, and, blessedly, an audience from its troubles with lighter and larynx.

The nameless ones meet on a cruising liner. A is busy and reserved, the "Marco Polo man," writer of chatty travel-books doomed to his thousand words a day. Z is a village shop-assistant and postmistress, a competition-winner spending her prize-money before returning to the counter. Capturing the deck-chair next to A she runs on like Mrs. Nickleby. She is at once ingenuous and candid, vague and persistent. Her diction, switch-board-trained, is infuriatingly nace. She uses only the ringing tone: her vowels are privet-clipped. A is by no means a patient sufferer. But if he can be rude, so can she. They are still sparring when the first conversation ends: Z's round by a large margin. Later we are in the Wiltshire shop. A is on a walking tour; Z is

saying "Thanks very much." He has forgotten; she has not. She trains all her batteries on him, with the Shavian result that, in the third scene, he has bought the shop. Between customers, he has time for flights of soaring philosophical rhetoric and much besides. At curtain-fall Z is telephoning to the rectory. The artichokes will be sent around, and there is also a question of banns. . . . Minor Shaw, no doubt, but in the theatre a lively hour. With Miss ELLEN POLLOCK and Mr. MICHAEL GOLDEN at the zenith of their conversational form,



BUSINESS WOMAN MANGUEVRING A PARTNERSHIP

A Mr. MICHAEL GOLDEN
 Z Miss ELLEN POLLOCK

this still unfamiliar "comediottina" (the author's word) becomes a show-piece of the Lyric season. Miss POLLOCK revels in her telephonist: she lisps in numbers, and the numbers come.

The evening begins with *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets*, better now when Mr. SHAW's Shakespeare is netting his phrases—a word-fancier on the prowl—than in the special pleading for a national theatre. The performance lags a little; but Miss MARGARET HALSTAN has the manner for Elizabeth of England, surprised by a strolling player at her palace of Whitehall and pleased with a midsummer night's adventure.

J. C. T.

"STRIKE IT AGAIN" (PRINCE OF WALES)

It is soothing, when the revue is over, to emerge into the almost monastic peace of Coventry Street, the cloistral hush of Leicester Square. As the poet put it on a different occasion, "Silence like a poultice comes To heal the blows of sound." Mr. BLACK's production, successor to *Strike a New Note*, depends as the other did on youthful exuberance and—more wisely—on the comic personality of Mr. SID FIELD.

One day Mr. FIELD will find a sketch-writer to match him. Then we shall see a combination and a form indeed. At present, from his entrance in *Slasher Green's* alarming overcoat to the revived fury of "Golfing," the revue rests heavily upon this buoyant clown with the repertory of accents—genteel or caressing or peevish—his accurate timing, his protean melodramatics in "The Convict's Return," and his rash-embraced despair (as a sadly stricken Field) when told to address the ball. If he can fool like this with the indifferent material at the Prince of Wales—the long studio sketch, for example—what will he do when he discovers a librettist up to his weight?

Apart from Mr. FIELD (who has Mr. JERRY DESMONDE as his accomplice) the best of the evening is in its silences—in SHERKOR's miming as a Continental goal-keeper and in a hat-trick by Mr. TOPPER MARTYN. Much of the rest is anything but

silent. Rather, it beats a tattoo on the eardrums. The Swing Street Kids open fire. The microphone crackles. The Boys and Girls swoop and shout and sing. Authors and composers, of whom it has taken nearly a score to build the revue, guy Penelope and Ulysses (the Greeks, I hope, would have had a fitting word), leave their hearts in Piccadilly, trace back the pin-up girl—one of our more tedious conquerors—to the Boer War, and in general strike their notes with a desperate zeal. The occasion without the fertile Mr. FIELD would be fatiguing; even he, it may be felt, is now too generous with his gibbering on the links.

J. C. T.

One Can't Live on Love.

(Fairy Tale for To-morrow)

THERE was once, in post-war Britain, an industrious and persevering hardware manufacturer named Juno Dod, who did very well and was quite pleased with himself until one morning he found his wife in tears.

When he had comforted her somewhat he learned with masculine astonishment the cause of her distress.

"You don't love me any more!" she cried, clinging to him nevertheless. "All you love is your old hardware!"

"I don't love my old hardware," protested Juno stoutly. "I only love my Old China," he added, for he was not without mental agility; and to prove his words he kissed her tenderly. This she enjoyed, but her plaint continued.

"Business, business, business, morning, noon and night," she sobbed, less heartbrokenly. "All I hear about is Dod's Harder Hardware. I sometimes think I married a man whose heart is made of hardware. We never go anywhere. We never do anything. It's all business, business, business, hardware, hardware, hardware!"

"But, my dear," Juno pointed out gently, "hardware is useful and necessary; and it doesn't make and market itself. A business like Dod's Harder Hardware needs a lot of nursing. If I had not kept my nose to the grindstone, Dod's Harder Hardware would probably have been much softer hardware, and where should we have been then?"

"Still in love," his wife cried. "Still happy! And you would still have been a human being, not a—a—"

"Piece of hardware," suggested Juno, with genuine helpfulness. "But darling, one can't live on love."

"It would be a treat to try, for a change," retorted his spouse. "Living on hardware hasn't been any kind of a thrill to me. If you thought more of me and less of your old business we'd both be happier!"

Well, Juno Dod was a kindly man and he had, besides, much faith in his wife's judgment. So, although he could not exactly see how it would all work out, he heeded her counsel.

He thought more of her and less of hardware. He took several photographs of her to his office and placed them on his desk. He spent much time in contemplating these attractive portraits.

He took her out to dinner and the theatre or the cinema more frequently. Often he would surprise her delightfully by giving himself a holiday and taking her for a pleasant jaunt into the country.

He was rewarded by her changed appearance. Her eyes, never negligible, sparkled superbly. Her smile was gay. Her step was light.

One day he mentioned to her that the business had collapsed.

"You are funny," she said, and pinched his cheek.

"I ought to have been a comedian," he agreed, and laughed heartily.

"My dear, the hugest joke—I'm broke, completely broke!"

They both roared at this.

"We'll have to live on love, darling!" she yelled, flinging his hat in the air.

"You always wanted to!" he reminded her, chuckling.

It was fully six hours before Juno could convince his wife that he was speaking the truth about the business. She burst into tears.

"All this time," she cried, "you've pretended you loved me and you've not done a stroke to support me! You'd see me starve rather than lift your little finger to a single piece of hardware! If you had thought more of your business and less of gallivanting about the countryside and going to theatres and things we shouldn't be where we are now!"

To-day Juno Dod is a very successful business man, and Dod's Harder Hardware is a household word wherever hardware is broken. He attributes his success to his wife.



"... and she's got paintings by Mural all over the bedroom walls."

For the Crown

("Loveliness and intelligence are the essentials required of our Railway Queen.")

I LEARN—and once again I bless
That daily pillar of the Press
From which so oft I glean
Pickings of lore at small expense—
That Beauty and Intelligence
Befit a Railway Queen.

Here we have food to fill the mind
With musings of the subtler kind,
Though doubtless you'll admit
That those two traits are worth a lot
In any job, no matter what,
Given a touch of It.

But granting that the Railway throne
Stands for such requisites alone,
We need not pause thereat;
My errant fancy taking wing
Asks, What about the Railway King?
A deep reflection, that.

I see him, grave and nobly planned,
An eye to threaten and command,
A Presence and a Port
Of dignity compact and grace,
And a high mug whereon you'd trace
Power of no common sort.

You urge that such were hard to seek?

* * * * *
I am a simple man and meek
And one that shuns the light,
But if on me the choice should fall
I am prepared to meet the call,
I should be there all right.

DUM-DUM.

Little Talks

HULLO, old haricot!
Well, so you won?
Won what?

About "Social"—and "National."
Oh, yes. "The Minister of Social Insurance." He's the "Minister of National Insurance", after all.

Well, I think you're wrong.
It's not a question of my being wrong. Parliament—both Houses—has decided: and it's not the done thing to question its decisions just after they're made. However, if you must, you may. Why "Social"?

Well, it's much better than "National".
Why? As a matter of fact, I should have preferred to have no adjective at all, "The Ministry of Insurance"—

Ah, but all insurance won't be under the Ministry!

All education isn't under the Ministry of Education. But you don't think it necessary to call it the Ministry of Social Education—or National Education. What about the Office of Works? There are lots of works not under that. What about the Ministry of Fuel and—

All right. Don't go on. But why did you make it "National" then?

I'm a democrat. Nearly all my supporters thought you must have some adjective, and preferred "National." Quite rightly they pointed to the precedent of the National Health Insurance Act which this Minister is taking over—

But that's something quite different.

Is it?

Of course.

Then why did Beveridge say what he did?

How dare you quote Beveridge? He was perfectly clear.

Well, what did he say?

He said in his Report—it was quoted in your silly debate: "The term 'Social Insurance' to describe this institution, implies both that it is compulsory, and that—"

Half a minute. How does it imply that? National Health Insurance was compulsory, too, if I remember rightly. Anyhow, I don't see how "social" implies compulsion. It never does anywhere else.

Well, wait till I've finished. It says "—both that it is compulsory and that men stand together with their fellows. The—"

In what form of insurance do men not stand together with their fellows? That's the whole idea of ins—

Shut up. "The term implies a pooling of risks except so far as a separation of risks serves a social purpose."

I never heard such nonsense.
Really, you can't talk like that!



"We've a few minutes in hand before the news—how about going over some of the old Russian place-names together?"

Can't I? I have the greatest respect for Sir William B. and his works, and especially for his gallantry in coming into the House and facing the music late in life, unlike some very vocal reformers I could mention. But even he can't make a word like "social" imply a yard of stuff like that—especially if it doesn't seem to have any particular meaning. Is fire insurance "social"?

No.

Why not? "Men stand together with their fellows," don't they? If I don't have a fire and you do, my money helps you out, doesn't it?

That's right enough; but—

And I should have thought that in fire insurance there was "a pooling of risks"?

Ah, but it's not compulsory. It doesn't cover everyone.

Oh? So the important thing that the adjective "social" adds to the ordinary meaning of "insurance" is the element of "compulsion"? Is that right?

No.

But, my dear old chap, you've just admitted that all the other elements in Sir William B.'s definition are equally to be found in the ordinary fire insurance—or indeed in marine insurance, or burglary insurance. The only difference between them and your "social" insurance is that everyone is not compelled by law to insure against fire and burglars. So that "social" must mean that this insurance must apply to everyone. In one word, "compulsory".

Yes—I suppose that's right.

Extraordinary. I've known the word "social" for so many years and I never realized, till now, that it meant "compulsory". "Social status"—compulsory status. "Social services"—compulsory services. "Social worker"—compulsory worker. "Social club"—compulsory club. "Social security"—compulsory—

Don't be an ass.

Who's being an ass?

I could make just as much fun of your own term "National".

It's not my word. And I don't think you could. No one has pretended that it means "compulsory". It means, I suppose, the form of insurance run by the Nation—and not by the Precautional Company. Like National Health Insurance.

I've told you that's something quite different.

Then why did Sir William B. say it was the same?

He never did! Social Security—

Wait a minute. We'll come to that later. We're talking about National versus Social Insurance. Now Sir

William made a speech the other day (reported in *The Times* of November 25th) extolling, rightly, the great ideals of the Liberal Party in the past. He referred to the National Health Insurance Act, and he said: "*The battle for social insurance—a new untried principle in Britain—was fought and won under the leadership of Mr. Lloyd George, by the great Liberal Government of 1906-14.*" So that National Health Insurance was the same as social insurance in 1906. And now you say it's something quite different.

There was unemployment insurance too.

It makes no difference to the argument. We've got that now. But it's no more "social" now than it was then. It's national—a State affair.

Of course, I was really thinking of Social Security.

What a wriggler you are! All right. I take it you're keen on that expression?

Certainly. Aren't you?

No man who respects words could possibly like it. To me, it's quite meaningless; and I don't see how it can bear the meaning attached to it by others. What do you mean by it?

I mean the principle, the ideal if you like, that every citizen, every individual, whatever his age or condition or misfortunes, should be assured a reasonable income and a reasonable standard of well-being. He should be reasonably secured against the risks that may befall any of us—

I see. That's very good. But you mean the material, the economic risks—not the social risks?

I mean a hundred things—loss of income through sickness or accident, unemployment, old age—

Quite, old boy. But loss of income is not a social risk. It's a "social" risk if I'm in danger of being turned out of my clubs, or being cold-shouldered in the suburb. "Social security", if it's applied to an individual, can only mean that he's assured of his social status—in which case the "upper classes" should have bigger benefits. Do you mean that?

Of course not.

Then I still don't see what social means. I understand National Security—the security of the nation—and Military Security—and Financial or even Economic Security. But not Social Security. An adjective if it's worth anything must do something to the noun. I don't see that this does anything.

Surely you see that all these proposals must make for a safe and stable society?

Oh? You mean it means the Security of Society?

That's one way of looking at it.

Oh, but, come, you can't have it both ways. Just now it was the security of the citizen—

Every citizen.

Every individual, I think you said. And of course you were quite right. That is the intention, that is the ideal—that every individual matters—and must be cared for. That's the English, and the Christian doctrine. That's the thing that gets the people—rightly or wrongly. But if you say the whole point is to secure Society, some people will say it's merely Fascism—others will say it's more likely to ruin Society, and so on.

Well, what name would you give it?

That's difficult. You see, I don't really see that there is any "it" you can give a name to. "Security!" How could you possibly have a Ministry of Security (of any sort)? You might as well have a Ministry of Happiness, or a Ministry of Sunshine—or a Ministry of Equality. It isn't the adjective that baffles so much as the noun. Even in the bombastic military world we've never gone so far as a Ministry of Security—we modestly stopped at the Ministry of Defence.

Not, at the present stage of the war, very apt.

I rather agree. But you see the point. After all, your insurance company insures your life but it doesn't undertake that you shall live for ever. I suppose if you must have "Security" the nearest thing would be Individual Economic Security or Personal Maintenance Security.

Too clumsy.

I know. You want a nice spell-binding catch-phrase, don't you—something that sounds nice, like Collective Security. Well, you know what happened to that.

Now, don't start that.

All right. Well, I don't think you can get a good one which is honest also. And I think the Government were quite right to drop "Social Security". The right name, of course, is obvious, only it's too simple for an Act of Parliament.

What's that?

All-in Insurance.

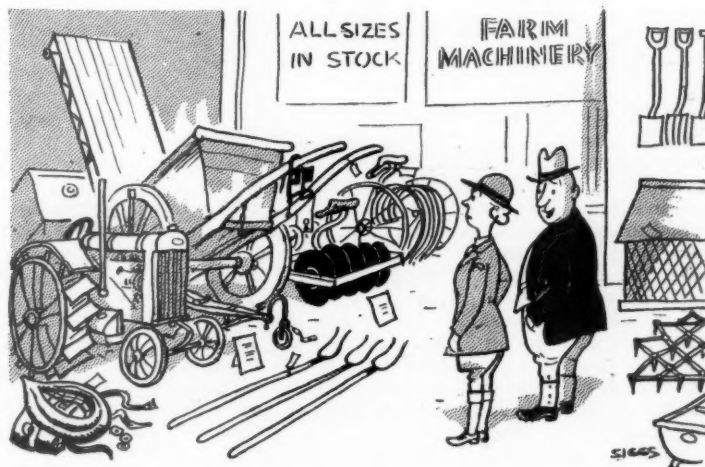
A. P. H.

Said the Soldier

"WHEN I go home again,"
Said the soldier,
"After being out East,
Things will seem slow
To grow, I know,
But I shan't mind in the least."

"When I go home again,"
Said the soldier,
"I'll have a garden gay
With phlox and stocks
And hollyhocks,
Which haven't sprung up in a day."

"When I go home again,"
Said the soldier,
"It will be my delight
To plant a creeper
Which is really a creeper,
And won't shoot up in a night."
A. W. B.



"See anything you fancy for Christmas?"



"I should 'ang on a bit if I was you—there's always a few 'igh-brows comes out tut-tuttin' about now."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Nostalgie du Trottoir

MISS MARGHARITA LASKI'S *Love on the Supertax* (CRESSET PRESS, 6/-) is a satirical fantasy, brief, witty and near enough to reality to prevent the reader's attention from wandering. The scene is Mayfair in the spring of 1944, and the story opens in a house in Curzon Street where *Clarissa* lives in squalor with her parents, a duke and duchess. Their servants have long since left them, none of them knows how to light the hot-water boiler, they breakfast miserably on food inefficiently cooked on a Primus stove, and having little money left and no credit they cannot afford to seek refuge in an hotel. In the flat of a Left-wing poet living in Hammersmith *Clarissa* meets *Sid Barker*, a worker, who is the guest of the evening. She is fascinated by his exotic Cockney accent and complete self-confidence, and when she remembers on waking up the next morning that he had seen her home and kissed her passionately on parting, she feels that her wildest dream is coming true. Weeks pass in an enchanted dream. *Sid* takes her to a Corner House, and watches her eating with

incredulous pity—"meals as filling as this were a commonplace to him." He teaches her how to ride in a bus, she stands by soap-boxes while he harangues the passers-by, they gaze together in Battersea Park at the noble mass of the power-station. But the barrier between them is too great; *Clarissa*, taken to have tea with *Sid's* father and mother, is a complete social failure. At a party in Mecklenburgh Square, *Clarissa* hears *Sid* explaining to their Russian hostess why marriage with *Clarissa* was impossible. He had loved her, but it was just "nostalgie du trottoir," she had the wrong background, it was no good. *Clarissa* understands. *Sid* could never marry a girl who wasn't quite out of the bottom drawer, and after one more effort to climb down to him, she returns to Mayfair, suddenly relieved and exultant to be home again. Up to this point Miss LASKI preserves her humorous detachment; but, perhaps feeling that some of her readers might conceivably be dense enough to suppose that she shares *Clarissa's* preference for a Bronx at the Dorchester to dark sweet tea in *Sid Barker's* family circle, she puts her proletarian ardour beyond dispute by leaving *Clarissa* in the arms of a polished and titled villain who is organizing a conspiracy to cheat the workers out of the fruits of victory and to establish a peace which will range the German army against Russia.

H. K.

Farmer's Fortune

A yeoman farmer's son who remembers his infant reactions to the death of the Prince Consort, Mr. S. G. KENDALL has eighty years of intimacy with the land to furnish a staple for his characteristic and circumstantial reminiscences. *Farming Memoirs of a West Country Yeoman* (FABER, 12/6) is not all farming. The author has been a close observer of his Somerset and Wiltshire neighbours throughout these chequered years; and as a record of rural manners of what one might roughly call the Dingley Dell period his book has few equals. Here are country feasts with candles in sconces; executions which, though not public, were attended by young and old; Gargantuan wedding breakfasts, funerals with crêpe hatbands; and a general interest in the social round which undoubtedly bound the under-privileged poor to the over-privileged rich. Farming, however, predominates; and its triumphs and griefs are fairly and vividly described. The Avon floods of 1875 provide a highly dramatic rescue of endangered stock by endangered men. The rotting harvests of '79 and the drought of '93 are contrasted with the bumper crops of '87. The book puts forward a manly plea that a "state-ridden business" may get a fairer deal than it does from the all-powerful voter in the towns.

H. P. E.

Two Poets

FREDERIC PROKOSCH is a luscious poet. This has not caused him to be rejected by his contemporaries, in fact one of them (Stephen Spender) has said: "I would have Mr. PROKOSCH woozier and woozier, so long as he can be woozy with precision." He has a true inward ear for the vowel sounds of the English language, so musical that they are difficult to set to music, and he can write the simple melodies which are some of the most difficult of all:

"Pears from the boughs hung golden,
The street lay still and cool,
Children with books and satchels
Came sauntering home from school . . ."

Everybody must enjoy PROKOSCH in this mood—the mood in which he wrote "Harvest," "Deep South," "Fishermen," and "Evening"; and everybody gets pleasure (of a rather different

kind) out of his cosmopolitanizing—his expert traveller's eye for scenery, which has made his novels widely popular. His new anthology, *Chosen Poems* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 6/-), includes, besides all the four poems mentioned above, eleven beautiful landscapes and seascapes. It seems a pity that he, or rather his work, should have come of age at a time when obscurity is so highly valued. Lately, PROKOSCH seems to have been struck more and more with the fact that his poetry is easily understood, and apparently he has decided to put this right. But he does not do well, to use a gardening term, in the Waste Land. We look to him for the "ambiguous music, leaf upon golden leaf," of which he sings, and we really can use the old-fashioned word in speaking of PROKOSCH—he is a born singer.

EDMUND BLUNDEN, on the other hand, stands for true scholarship flowering naturally into verse, or rather for that combination of learning and nature-worship—the scholar wandering in the green fields—which, for six hundred years, has been at the heart of English poetry. His new volume, *Shells by a Stream* (MACMILLAN, 5/-), represents what he has done since the *Collected Poems* of 1940. They are not war poems in the ordinary sense—indeed, the man who wrote "Zero" and "At Senlis Once" does not need to say anything more about the realities of fighting. Nor are there many pieces in his earlier pastoral style, though there are some—"Dovedale on a Spring Day," "God's Time," "The Nameless Stream" (the last verse of this is an exquisite reminiscence of BLUNDEN's favourite, the Northamptonshire poet, John Clare). His new work seems to be something more subtle—it is his own personal creed, his declaration of trust in the healing power of the country life and of human love. It is all the more precious because it is the confession of a reticent mind, shy, guarding itself, intensely jealous of intrusion into the citadel where its treasures are hidden.

P. M. F.

Shroppie Fly-Boat

A type of canal-boat built for comparatively perishable cargoes used to be run by a Shropshire canal company with relays of horses; and it was such a *Narrow Boat* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 12/6) that Mr. L. T. C. ROLT bought a year or so before the war for a permanent home. From July 1939 to the winter of 1940 he traversed over four hundred miles of Midland water-ways, recording what was left of canals and of an English tradition which demanded guts and independence not only in boatmen and boat-builders but in wharfside villages, inns and shops. An engineer himself, Mr. ROLT adapted the *Cressy's* engines to paraffin and coped efficiently with the hundred and fifty locks encountered between Banbury and the Shropshire border. His prime interest—apart from the clannish, vigorous hard-living world he moved in—is the drab industrial England he is forced to survey; and he notes not only the increasing squalor of the countryside but the worked-out coal seams, derelict blast furnaces and ruined locomotive sheds through which the whirligig of Time brings in his revenges. Yet the book, as a whole, deals chiefly and happily with a brave old world to which Mr. D. J. Watkins-Pitchford's illustrations and an enchanting jacket by a barge-painter bear each their own eloquent witness.

H. P. E.

Bryanston Square in Retrospect

A House in Bryanston Square (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 16/-) is a volume of reflections and reminiscences grouped round Mr. ALGERNON CECIL's London home, which was destroyed during an air-raid. The models Mr. CECIL has had in mind while writing the book are Amiel and Senancour, Eugénie de Guérin and Henry Adams, cultured, sensitive

souls who have in common a certain remoteness from reality in its unfiltered state. There is much of interest in Mr. CECIL's discursive meditations on Pascal and Montaigne and Rabelais, with the last of whom he makes a brave attempt to seem completely at his ease. But it is difficult to discover any unifying thought or feeling in the book. In the preface Mr. CECIL expresses a hope that his book may "do something, however slight, to revive that sense of providential direction which seems to be disappearing from human life." It is, he says, through failure to think things out to their foundations that a muddle-minded age has come to grief, and he contrasts us with Victorian England, an age of great spiritual and political geniuses. Does he, then, regard Victorian England as a lost Eden? Apparently not, for he continues: "The flesh-pots of Egypt lie behind us." His real complaint against these times would therefore seem to be not that they are less spiritual than fifty or a hundred years ago but that they are less orderly, comfortable and grateful to the aesthetic sense. However, as the meditations of a Catholic hedonist this book has a significance which it lacks as a guide to the Promised Land.

H. K.

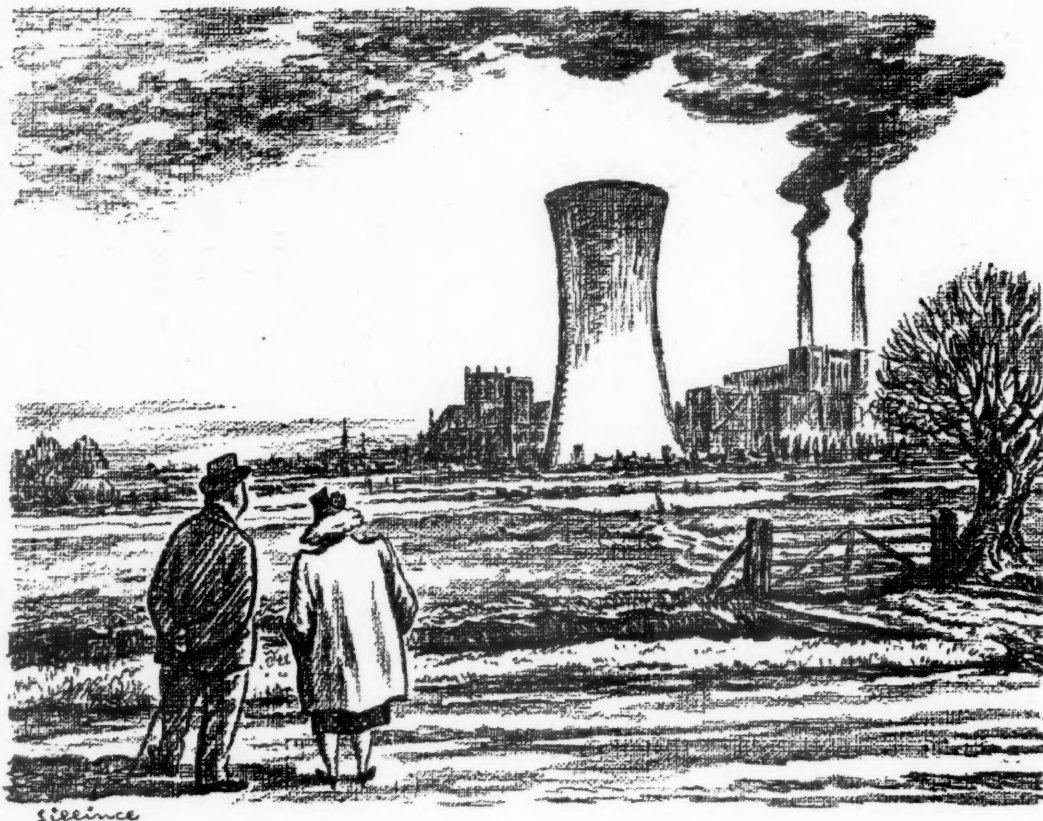
The Joy of Life

MR. LEO WALMSLEY's books about north-east coast fishermen and their lives have always been so pleasurably informed by a keen interest and delight in everyday people and things that one would naturally expect to find the same qualities in his autobiography. He has called his book *So Many Loves* (COLLINS, 12/6), and it falls roughly into three principal sections, the first describing his boyhood and early life at the village he calls "Bramblewick," the second concerned with Africa and an abortive filming expedition, the third with his own literary struggles and with the filming of his novel *Three Fevers*. Mr. WALMSLEY's zest for living seldom seems to have deserted him; but his heart never appears to have been really in Africa, and the things there which arouse his enthusiasm the most are streams that remind him of a West Yorkshire burn, and an old Swahili boatman with the same twinkling eyes as a friend of his Bramblewick boyhood. The literary life, again, is seldom really interesting to read about. Bramblewick has, in fact, been both his first and his last love, but the whole book is written with disarming frankness and an agreeable freedom from literary egoism.

C. F. S.



"Or were you perhaps looking for something a little more prohibitive?"



"Of course, if they could put a flower or two in it, it wouldn't look quite so unsightly."

The Poet Under Orders

"DEAR me," yawned the Editor, "I was dreaming—" "Of a White Paper Christmas?" I said, beaming. "No," he replied. "You may as well know it, I was dreaming that you were a poet."

Not a very seasonable retort. However, this is the time of year
When we sink our differences (if we can find some beer),
When everyone, with certain exceptions—I won't mention names,
Though it's unlikely, sweet reader, that you are my Uncle James
Or that frightful old hag Aunt Lulu or ma-in-law Trump,
(The last Trump, happily), or the stinker who borrowed my bicycle pump—
Where was I? Oh, yes—this is the time when we're all
Jolly good fellows,
Greeting each other with loud and affectionate "Hellos!"
Anyway, that's what we would be doing. But are we?
No fear!

NO BEER

Let's turn to jollier things. What d'you say to joining the "gins"
For Christmas, at one of our more superior inns?

Don't stay put-upon or static,
Spend Yuletide at the Maison Mozambique.
Terms: from seventeen guineas a week.
(N.B.—We can do you a roomy attic
With quaint old sloping beams for slightly less.
Apply for brochure to the Manageress.)

(In parenthesis, have you heard about dear old Aunt Winnie's Wizard remark, on being given her bill at The Spinneys? Clutching the aged head-waiter she cried, "My goodness, my guineas!")

Not the Mozambique, you think. Oh, well,
Let's ring Ye Olde Rugged Rox Hotel
"Where every prospect pleases" all the while
And only the manager (perhaps) is vile.
"Is that the Rugged Rox round which the ragged—
pardon?"
Nothing except a lean-to in the garden.

(Later) "Is that the Ton o' Bricks?" ...
No vacancies till 1946.
 (Still later) "Is that the Nissen Huts?" ...
Rooms? Say—are you nuts?
 (Ever so late) "The Wigan Pier?"
'Ere.
"Owt?"
Nowt.

Refrain from making frivolous telephone calls.
 Don't ring up Mrs. Jones, go wring out your "smalls."
 (Issued by the Priority Authority of the British Anti-
 Skittish Communication Administration.)

When you would romp beside the foam,
 Or through the woods of Bretton roam,
 Remember: **THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME.**
 Spend Christmas This Year beside Your Own
 Lump of Coal.
 (Issued by the Ministry of Stay-Puttery and
 Static Control.)

That being that, let us with merry curses,
 Festive oaths and devil-may-care purses,
 Settle down to the jolly problem of what
 We're going to give whom (whether they
 want it or not).

Come, come, now, why so shop-soiled, why so solemn?
 Have you forgotten *The Times* Personal Column?
 The browned-off shopper's paradise—oh, rather.
 What about a Billiard Table for father,
 Or a 20-ft. Cruiser or a Mahogany Bed,
 And an Electric Razor (owner gone "cut-throat") for
 Fred?
 And what about a nice bit of Persian Lamb
 For Mildred, and a Pre-Imbecility Pram
 For the Buttermeres, and a Gorgeous Dark Mink Goat
 (I will read that again)—a Gorgeous Dark Mink Coat
 For the "daily obliger"? And that friend you met in the
 Bahamas—
 Wouldn't she appreciate a pair of Pastel Nun's-Veiling
 Pyjamas,
 Or even 6 yards of Red Figured Velvet? And what about
 a 2-storied Doll's House
 With Electric Light and h. and c. for Susan, and a Gold
 Sequin Blouse
 Or a couple of Leopard Skins for Aunt Thingmy? And
 hev you
 A 38-waisted, 42-chested, tallish, West-Endish nephew?
 If so, he'd fit a Gentleman's Lovat Green Overcoat (by
 Parkes and Parrat).
 And can't you think of someone in need of an 18-carat
 £200 Gold Cigarette Case, or whose Christmas would be
 brightened
 By a Sprigged Lemon Silk Picture Frock (no doubt the
 Loose Crêpe-de-chine Lining could be tightened)?
 And surely one of your friends requires a Pedometer, a
 Microscope,
 An Unwashed Chinese Carpet, or a Bust of Alexander
 Pope?
 Perhaps the ads. in the *Weekly Squint*
 May give us a hint.

Don't be vexed
 Or perplexed
 If you can't get a SUPER-HEXT

All-soaking
 All-cleansing
 All-drying
 Washing-up Machine this Christmas.
 Tungsten, Wolfram and Co.
 Will darn well see that you get one next.

Hitler Bites Carpets! The more orthodox
 Prefer a pound of *Creamy-Dreamy* Chocs.
 The chocs with the "chummy" centres
 (Remarked as soon as a tooth enters!)
 Please wait for C-D Day, when
 We shall be making them again.

We know quite well which are Nicky's
 Favourite Bikkies.
 Haven't we been making Biks
 Since 1786?
 We have a hunch
 There'll soon be lots and lots and lots of
Custardy Crunch.

You, who have waited in a fish-queue,
 Can wait a bit longer for supplies of GLU-GLU,
 The Goliath of Adhesives. Come, don't be
 so glum!
 Isn't there a war on, chum?

Gone are the days of bracelet and bangle and brooch!
 Give her a bottle of ALLBUT-PORT or SHERRY-APPROACH.

Well, it's up to you to choose.
 Meanwhile, let's have the news.

Here is the Nine o'Clock News which, in the absence at an
 Announcers' Ball
 Of Frank Phillips, Freddie Grisewood, Freddie Allen, Bob
 Robinson, Joe McLeod, old Uncle Stu Hibberd
 and all,
 Will be crooned by Good Bing Wenceslas—
Voice (remarkably like the Editor's). Not if I know it,
 you ass.

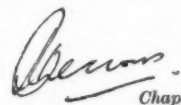
*The Secretary, Punch Comforts Fund,
 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.*

MY DEAR SIRS,—Your most generous parcels of
 woollies have come safely to hand and I should
 just like to take this opportunity of expressing my
 sincere thanks.

I shall be grateful if you will pass on to all your
 readers who contribute to your comforts fund my
 sincere appreciation, for it is only through the unseen,
 and all too often unacknowledged, work of such people
 that we are enabled to issue to our seafaring lads
 those extra garments which they need so much and
 appreciate so warmly.

With all good wishes and very many thanks for
 your generosity to us at all times,

I am, Yours sincerely,


 Chaplain

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940

Mosquito Nets

SINCE Captain Sympson and myself became Travelling Welfare Officers we have lost our permanent batman, and though when Abdulla Wegusa was with us we were inclined to harp on his defects, we have now discovered that he was really quite useful. In the matter of putting up mosquito nets, for instance.

Lest there are any Britons left whom the war has not yet taken in some capacity or another to a country where mosquito nets are used, it must be explained that they are of two types. One type is very long and thin and rises very high at one end, where the face goes under, and very low at the other end, so that mosquitoes can bite one's feet through it. The other type, if properly erected, is like an oblong box exactly the shape of the bed if the bed is the right shape—which of course it never is. Camp beds start by being the right shape, but as the canvas gets stretched they get wider and wider so that the sides come out under the net, and if you lie in such a position that part of you is on the bit of bed that is not under the net the mosquitoes soon find out. Some people get a tailor to make the beds thin again by stitching the canvas down the middle, but it is really cheaper to buy a new bed or else start the night sleeping on the sand instead of suddenly striking it violently during the small hours of the morning when the stitches give way.

The position with other sorts of beds that get issued to you is much simpler.

They just make no attempt to be the same size as the mosquito net. So the thing to do is to erect the net over the bed as well as you can and then tuck the ends underneath the palliasse or mattress. In our part of Egypt, however, you do not use either a palliasse or mattress, because if you do all the insects in the neighbourhood immediately select it as the venue for a jamboree. So the only way is to nail the end of the mosquito net to the edge of the bed if it is wooden, or tie it with pieces of wire if it is made of metal. If you do this, of course, it is quite impossible to get into the bed, but you can lie underneath it and think how nice it would be to be inside and not getting bitten.

My net is of the box type and Sympson's is of the long thin type, and when we were simple lieutenants in the old Company, Abdulla Wegusa used to manage to fit our nets to our beds in a most successful manner, using about a ball of string for each to fasten bits of it to various parts of the roof of the tent and then holding the bottom fringe down by tying old boots and flat-irons and manuals of Military Law to it. We tried to explain this method to the batman who was lent us when we visited 5065 Blochuana Company, and he certainly used a great deal of string, but neither of us had a happy night. This may have been partly because the beds lent to us were very tall and thin. They had been made some months earlier by a Blochuana carpenter, afterwards

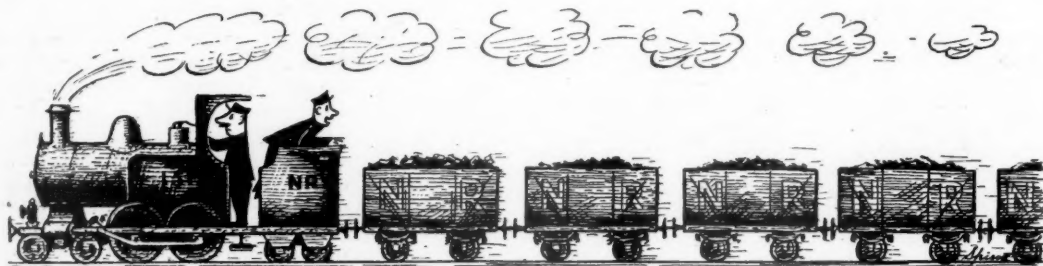
sent home on compassionate grounds, and they were so unsteady that unless the occupant lay very still and right in the middle they toppled over. Mine was the first to go, at approximately 0001 hrs. If the net had not been there I should merely have been spilled out on the floor and suffered nothing worse than local abrasions, but as it was, the net being fastened to the tent roof and also underneath the bed, the bed could not fall right over, but just slanted sufficiently to tip me out into what may be called the slack of the net, where I lay, trapped, like a salmon in a string bag.

At the sight of my predicament Sympson was overcome by a fit of hysterical laughter. I asked him with cold dignity to come and release me, but at that moment his own bed toppled over, and he found himself in the same position as myself, except that he was also being slowly hanged by a piece of tape that had pulled tight round his neck.

We were eventually released by the Major, who heard our cries and rushed out of his tent with his revolver, thinking that the Blochuanas had mutinied.

"What on earth made you erect your mosquito nets?" he asked irritably. "This part of Egypt isn't a malarial area at all. We don't use nets here."

Sympson and I both felt that somebody ought to have mentioned this earlier.



"Stop suddenly, Gus, and make them all go bang-bang-bang!"

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KING HENRY VIII—a large eater—was once so pleased with a succulent joint of beef placed before him that he inquired its name.

'Loin, Sire,' his cook said.

The King retorted, 'In future it shall have a more honourable title,' and drawing his sword he said, 'Arise, Sir Loin.'

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